

Harry Potter, Wizarding Barrister

A/N: Harry finds himself doing an unusual thing after the war: defending the innocent before the Wizengamot. Here's what happens during his final case.

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"Silence," the shrill voice called out in the courtroom. Courtroom Number Ten fell into silence.

It was quite a simple matter on the docket for the day, no question as to the outcome. The defendant was clearly guilty and had been sane at the time he'd committed his heinous crimes. He'd been an unmarked supporter of the Dark Lord Voldemort and hadn't been captured in the roundup that happened after Voldemort died. Then he'd begun to set himself up as the next Dark Lord.

It was a clear case for a Dementor's Kiss.

Except for one thing. That was the reason everyone was here now.

The Courtroom was packed. It was a simple case, but nearly every seat in the entire expanded room was filled. There was only an empanelment of five Wizengamot members to hear the case, but still nearly every one of the seventy-eight members was in attendance, most sitting with the other members of the public in the gallery.

The case was simple and the conclusion was foregone. But people knew when to expect a good show.

This would be the first time that anyone had seen Harry Potter in six months. It was only the briefest scrap of parchment to the Wizengamot that let anyone know the defendant had any kind of representation at all. Potter hadn't visited with his client once, and his note had only shown up six days before.

But the news had spread.

The room was silent. The defendant hadn't yet been brought in, but the powers that be were still waiting the remaining two minutes until the trial was scheduled to begin. Harry Potter, Wizarding Barrister, always appeared right at the stroke of the hour.

He was famous in the popular world for his multiple defeats of the Dark Lord Voldemort, particularly the famous Final Battle where Voldemort finally succumbed to all the Dark Magic he had used to prolong his mortality. But, in the political realms, Harry Potter was famous because of his advocacy skills. He'd been pursued by the Ministry, by Quidditch teams, by every business in the Wizarding World. But Harry had just settled into a small office above Madame Malkin's in Diagon Alley.

Harry had argued 143 cases before the Wizengamot. Harry Potter had won each case...and more.

His first case had arisen when Fred and George Weasley were accused of crimes under the Experimental Charms Act by some unhappy recipients of their pranks. It was after the war, at the height of the Boy-Who-Lived's fame, and so Harry Potter said a few words in their defense. Not only were they acquitted, but the Wizengamot began the process of redrafting the legislation. Experimentation and creativity should be encouraged, not quashed.

After that, Harry took a few requests here and there and interceded when he could. He didn't lock himself into his profession until he took on the case of Mortimer Wedgeridge, a wizard and a werewolf. Harry prepared an elaborate defense. Mortimer was not only acquitted, and his accusers penalized for their false claims, but the Wizengamot had been forced by popular demand to begin repealing and revising the harsh anti-werewolf legislation.

Of course, the members of the Wizengamot were unhappy. They liked being able to do as they pleased...or to offer their votes for sale to the party that cared the most. Everyone was assembled in the room at present to see what had never seemed possible. Harry Potter's first failure. Cornelius Fudge, the ex-Minister of Magic and the leading candidate in the next election, was perched on the edge

of his seat. He was particularly interested in this case, and in why Potter had selected this defendant to represent.

The door creaked open and then Harry Potter stepped through into the courtroom. He was precisely on time. He walked down the steps toward the pit of the courtroom. He was dressed in fine robes as befitted the Head of two Noble and Ancient Families. By all rights, he should be seated on the Wizengamot, not arguing before it. But Harry Potter had turned down each offer. "I'm having the time of my life," he'd said more than once.

The new Director of Magical Law Enforcement, the sixth since Amelia Bones had been assassinated during the war, was hardly intimidating and barely competent at handling his responsibilities. He began the proceedings and then called in the defendant Reginald Messecomb. Unmarked supporter of the Dark Lord Voldemort. A Dark Wizard performing rituals to make himself into the next Dark Lord. Man responsible for the deaths of four Ministry Aurors and more than forty-two other witches and wizards.

One morning of trial and a Dementor's Kiss in the afternoon. Open and shut, even with Harry Potter defending the scum.

The Director of the DMLE introduced everyone, then nodded toward Harry. "Harry Potter, for the defense, director."

The Director nodded. The inevitable could begin.

But that's when things changed. First, things no one was aware of. Then things that were merely odd. Then things that were revolutionary.

Harry stood up. He cast a series of silent, wandless spells throughout the courtroom. He sealed the courtroom shut. He prevented any offensive spells at all from being cast in the room. He also cast a mild truth-compulsion spell that would encourage people to speak the truth, but it wouldn't prohibit them from lying, if they truly intended to. He finally cast a nasty little hex that would clearly prove when someone was lying. In highly visible ways.

“Director, I wonder if I could request the right to question my client under Veritaserum. I’ll try to quickly establish the parameters of this case. You can feel free to ask any additional questions after I’ve finished my questioning.”

The crowd began to murmur. This wasn’t how cases worked in the Wizengamot. In fact, the Director knew this. But it was Harry Potter asking. And it could prove immensely damaging for the defendant, given that Barrister Potter hadn’t even bothered to question his witness.

“I’ll allow it.”

Harry moved down and stood next to Reginald Messecomb. A group of people came over to begin administering the truth serum to an unwilling defendant. But Harry just smiled slightly at the defendant and encouraged him to accept the truth serum.

While the effects were settling into his body, Harry turned to face Minister Scrimgeour, who was still hanging onto power by a slim thread. “Minister,” Harry said in a voice loud enough to be heard by everyone in the room, “I would like to inform you that this is the last case I will ever represent before the Wizengamot.” Harry performed a respectful bow while Scrimgeour’s face turned into a horrendous scowl.

Harry turned back to his defendant while the chattering and murmuring erupted inside the chamber. ‘Why?’ ‘Last case.’ ‘Has he gone barmy?’ ‘He’s a young man, what’s he up to?’ ‘Bah! Rich and famous dilettante...probably bored.’

Harry began his interrogation of his client, the simple, obvious questions. Then he turned to the interesting stuff.

“Did you support the Dark Lord Voldemort?”

“Yes.”

“Did you ever take his mark?”

“No.”

“How did you support him?”

“I supplied him money and intelligence. I worked in the Unclaimed Fortunes office in the Ministry. Any inheritances that weren’t claimed within five years I ensured went into a special account that Lucius Malfoy and a few others could access.”

“Is this account still available?”

“Yes, I’ve been using it to fund my current work.”

That was a new detail. The Ministry and its inheritance laws were funding Dark Lords. The crowd was very uneasy, even angry at this revelation.

“How much money had flowed through this account?”

“More than a hundred million galleons.”

Now people were angry. Fudge, the ex-Minister, was hopping up and down. That amount of money was enough to fund the Ministry for a dozen years, let alone a bunch of Dark Lords. It also meant that a number of very valuable, probably very old estates, had been destroyed and liquidated by this man.

But Harry wasn’t stopping with his interrogation.

“What other crimes did you commit in the name of the Dark Lord Voldemort?”

The defendant launched into a long recital of crimes, every word of his damning him all the more in the eyes of everyone in the room. No one could understand why Harry Potter was doing this...did he want to convict his own client? Of course, no one on the Wizengamot wanted to stop Harry from imploding his own case. No one intervened, no one stopped the proceedings. But the audience grew repulsed by what they were hearing.

“...and bribery of officials in foreign governments and in foreign businesses and banking establishments.”

“Tell me about your rise to power as the next Dark Lord.”

The testimony to this question lasted longer than twenty minutes. It was a horrible recounting of gruesome dark spells and rituals, the torture of innocents, and every other kind of wizarding crime. More than one person in the audience was ready to assassinate Reginald at that moment.

“I have but two more questions of this witness at this time... Do you have an unregistered animagus form?”

“Yes, a gray heliobacter spider.”

Harry nodded. “Have you ever killed anyone while in your animagus form?”

“Yes, several muggles. Never a wizard, though.”

Harry Potter explained he was done with his questioning and offered his client for any further questions. No one on the Wizengamot thought it was possible to do more damage.

The questioning moved on to other prosecution witnesses: to Reginald’s potential followers, to the Aurors who captured him finally, to several of his victims.

Then it was time for the defense. Less than an hour had passed since Harry had finished questioning his own client. But it seemed to the room it had been an eternity. Still, they expected something from Harry.

“The defense will question Cornelius Fudge.”

That brought out a pile of murmurs and not a few giggles.

Fudge, however, was apoplectic. “Ministerial privilege. I will not testify on the behalf of such a wizard.”

Harry smiled. "Might I remind Mr. Fudge that he is not the Minister of Magic?"

Fudge fumed as he stood up. "We'll just see if that's still true after the next election," he hissed under his breath.

Harry stood up and moved to where Fudge was seated in front of the Wizengamot panel. He asked a number of simple questions before Fudge felt the world fall out from under him.

"As Minister for Magic, you had some responsibility for issuing pardons?"

With a hesitant voice, Fudge replied, "Yes."

"Under what circumstances could you issue a pardon?"

"Under any. It was completely within my discretion."

Fudge's eyes were wide in fear and anger now. He hadn't meant to say that much, not at all.

"I see. And a pardon was a complete reprieve for any listed crimes?"

"Yes, that is how a pardon works." The anger was humming inside his words.

"Tell me, Minister, about your ability to enlist private parties to do the government's work. I believe such a thing is known as granting letters of marque and reprisal."

Fudge lost all his color, but still he felt like he had to answer something. "Yes. It's within the Minister's right to authorize people to perform governmental work."

"Have you ever granted letters of marque and reprisal, Mister Fudge."

After straining for a few moments, he said, "Yes."

Harry looked at the former Minister. "Tell me, sir, how well did you know my client when you were serving as Minister of Magic?"

Fudge had to hope that his interrogator didn't know the true answer to that question. "I believe I met him a few times, at various social gatherings. He was fairly junior at the time in the Inheritances office, you know."

Harry smiled, then turned to a new line of questions.

"Sir, what was your best subject in school, if I might ask."

Fudge was annoyed, but didn't see how it could hurt him.

"Charms."

"And you pursued a Charms Mastery, did you not?"

The trap he'd fallen into was now obvious. The problem was that everything concerning this topic was public record.

"Yes."

"What was the subject of your thesis?"

Fudge mumbled something.

"Excuse me. I don't think the court heard your answer."

"Compulsion charms."

"Several of the charms you created in your earlier years have been licensed to Ministry aurors and other officials, am I correct?"

Fudge scowled and nodded.

"I'll take that as a 'yes.' Powerful stuff, congratulations. Now, Mister Fudge, can you tell me if you've ever granted a pardon or issued letters of marque and reprisal to my client over there."

Fudge knew he was in trouble. Every fiber of his body was screaming at him to lie. So he did.

“No.”

But in that moment, a black haze descended over Cornelius Fudge’s body. He thought he was dying. So did a fair number of the people in the audience gallery.

‘What is that?’ ‘It looks like he’s in limbo between this world and the next.’ ‘I’ve never seen anything like that before.’ There was a lot of muttering from every corner.

Instead of looking concerned, Harry stepped back toward where his seat in the gallery was. He pulled out his wand, for show, and levitated a small box into the air. Then, he pulled two documents out of the box. He seemed unwilling to touch the documents, except with his magic.

Harry spoke up then. “My apologies. It seems that Mister Fudge has just told a lie in this room, you see.”

The shocks went wide through the room. The witches and wizards gathered there didn’t like knowing there was something so visible. A fair number of people rushed toward the door. They wanted out of this room if there was such powerful truth-telling magic at work inside here now. Strangely, at the time, no one asked how such powerful magic came to be. Such a spell would normally require a coven of thirteen to cast successfully.

Then people discovered that they couldn’t leave, no matter what they tried. It took several minutes before people were returned to their seats. The Wizengamot itself looked very peeved at these happenings. They hadn’t requested any of this. In fact, they knew it was next to impossible to cast any spells in this room at all.

Into this temporary calm, Harry restarted his case.

“Mister Fudge, I have in front of you two documents that you signed while you were the sitting Minister for Magic. The first is a pardon for my client...”

The room erupted in shouts now. Harry pulled out his wand and cast a one-way silencing charm. Harry wouldn't be bothered by their spluttering, but the gallery could hear whatever was happening, provided they remained quiet.

“...a pardon for my client. It specifically pardons him for dissolving ancient estates, embezzling money from the Ministry of Magic, supporting Death Eaters, and a dozen other listed crimes. I am holding...”

“Hold on,” said one of the jurists. “Why didn't your client already claim to have been pardoned for those crimes, Mr. Potter?”

“Excellent question, Mister Edgecombe. I have a document from five cursebreakers at Gringotts testifying to some very interesting features of these two agreements Mister Fudge signed. In short, there is a charm on them, a kind of compulsive memory charm, that prevents anyone who touches them, save the caster of the spell, from every being able to speak of them. It's actually quite devious...”

“So, you're saying your client knew he had been pardoned for his crimes, but was unable to speak about his pardon?”

“Exactly my point, Mister Edgecombe. Exactly. In fact, the cursebreakers identified the magical signature as belonging to one Cornelius Fudge. So...”

The former Minister was about to pop a blood vessel by now. His carefully crafted plans were about to dissolve in front of his face. He'd used this series of charms hundreds of times while in office. What Potter was saying would ruin him, even if he hadn't found the other document related to this case.

“I object. Goblins have always hated me. You can't trust their impartiality in cursebreaking...”

“If you’d read the report, you’d know that two wizards and three goblins each independently examined the document. None of them was able to determine the appropriate way to break the charm, so I’d ask everyone not to handle the document. It would place the same compulsion upon you.”

In the course of the next five minutes, Cornelius Fudge tried to escape once, tried to assassinate Harry Potter once, tried to blow up the whole courtroom once, and tried to kill himself twice. Nothing he did seemed to work. It was as if magic itself had stopped working here.

“...so, you see, Cornelius Fudge pardoned my client and then offered him his official approval to continue working to destabilize the wizarding world. Based on what I’ve been able to gather, Mister Fudge knew that he was on his way out of office because of his handling of the return of Voldemort. So he attempted to lay the groundwork then for his own eventual return to power. Scrimgeour would get the credit for holding office when Voldemort fell, but also the blame for not stopping the next Dark Lord. In fact, it was Fudge who set this would-be dark lord on his path, with government sanction to boot....”

The gallery was now fully ready to murder Fudge and everyone else who worked for the Ministry of Magic. The depths of the corruption seemed to be completely obvious now and overwhelming. Scrimgeour looked like he wanted to resign from the Ministry himself. But, after the Wizengamot had to dismiss all the charges against Harry Potter’s client, Harry let another one of his surprises out.

His client looked ecstatic. He knew he was protected from this trial, but the compulsion had prevented him from producing the documents. Now, he was free. That was what worried Harry. He was glad to have won this tussle, but he wouldn’t let someone this evil walk out of the Ministry.

“Ladies and gentlewizards of the Wizengamot, I should point out, in my role as an impartial representative of the law, that my client was specifically not absolved of any crimes he may have committed while

in his illegal animagus form... I will have to refrain from representing my former client in this particular matter, I'm afraid."

The members of the Wizengamot perked up. Why was Harry now proving claims against his own client? But they didn't question it. They directed a trial for these crimes. Within a dozen minutes, Reginald Messecombe was convicted of this rare, but very serious crime. His magic was drained from him, ever preventing him from becoming an animagus again, and then he was sentenced to ten years in Azkaban.

Thus, Harry Potter won his 144th case and still made sure that justice happened. But he wasn't done yet.

People in the gallery were still too shocked to move. Fudge had been sent to the holding cells. The prisoner was both innocent, by governmental privilege, of his major crimes and guilty of a minor one no one, save Harry Potter, thought to charge him with. Bizarre.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'm afraid we do have some more business to transact before anyone can leave the room..."

The squawking returned. 'Who's he to order us around,' seemed to be the overriding sentiment.

In fact, although only four people in the room knew it, it was exactly Harry Potter's job to order them around today.

The most famous wizarding barrister turned to face the new head of the Wizengamot. "I have a few questions to ask, my good sir, before we can get down to business. First, out of the nearly eighty members of this legislative and judicial panel, how many are from the traditional pureblooded families."

The head of the Wizengamot, Befor Witherspoon, scrunched his face. Was this a trick question? Everyone knew the answer.

"All but three, Mr. Potter, but I don't see why..."

“Very good. Now, please tell me what percentage of the wizarding population comes from old pureblooded families, like those represented on the Wizengamot.”

“I don’t know. Perhaps ten percent of our population...”

“Very good, sir.” Harry was enjoying his role immensely. He’d first been very angry and scared at having his new role thrust upon him. Wasn’t it enough to be the Boy-Who-Lived, Basiliskbane, Deafeater-of-Darkness, ad nauseam? Now he also held a position in the Muggle world, an important one. The one that brought him here today, to clean up every kind of ancient mess.

“I would like for everyone in the room to listen to these next questions. If you have ever paid a bribe to a government official, please stand up.”

Because of the truth compulsion, nearly three quarters of the room stood.

“Be seated. Now, please stand up if you ever accepted a bribe while in government service.”

Fully a quarter of the room was standing now, including nearly every member of the Wizengamot. For the next twenty minutes, Harry Potter went through dozens of questions like these. He wanted to absolutely prove the utter corruption of the wizarding government beyond any doubt. He had some shocking news to deliver. It was a good thing that no offensive magic could be used in this chamber.

“Please be seated. I have a brief story to tell everyone and then some more interesting news to deliver. Our recently ended war has brought us closer together with the Muggle government than at any other time in the last fifty years. In fact, the Muggle Prime Minister was so concerned that he had to reveal our existence to the Queen and her advisors. That’s when the research began. Officially, we recognize the Queen and her Muggle Prime Minister. But, none of the Queen’s historians could find the slightest reference to us. We all know that the Ministry is hundreds of years old, but it seemed that no one ever sought to ask the Queen’s permission to form our government, you

see. So I and several other witches and wizards have been meeting with Muggles since Voldemort's fall to figure out how to resolve this matter."

The chattering continued and got louder through the speech. It seemed the only thing these people were capable of doing.

"In fact, I've been entirely in the Muggle world for the last seven months. And, now, I have several royal proclamations to deliver.

"Be it known that we, Queen Elizabeth of England, have recognized the ennobled Houses of Potter and Black in recognition done to our person and our nation. Further, we bestow the titles of Lord Potter and Baron Black in perpetuity to the family of Harry James Potter. Further, we bestow a Life Peerage to Harry James Potter, Lord Potter, Baron Black, and designate him as the first Wizard Lord of the House of Lords in Parliament."

That one got attention. The next one would be even better.

"Be it known that we, Queen Elizabeth of England, do hereby dissolve the wizard world's body known as the Wizengamot as it is illegal and was never royally chartered. As a royal peculiar, the Wizarding World falls under our direct authority. We hereby grant everlasting authority to deal with the Wizarding World to the life members of the Wizard Lords in Parliament."

The list of proclamations continued. It took a while for people to begin to understand. Their way of life was ended. They were now under scrutiny by the Muggles and were going to be held accountable. Their corruption was gone. Most of their hundreds of years of laws were gone.

"...so that's it," Harry said. "There is only one Wizard Lord at present: me. I have to go through hundreds of years of laws and approve or reject them before the Queen will allow us to begin discussing new Wizard Lords. For some reason, she seems to trust me. Probably because she's never read the Daily Prophet..."

Harry Potter was, in his heart of hearts, enjoying himself. He'd kept layers of secrets for years now. And he was just now giving up a few of them. In truth, Harry was already through with three hundreds years of laws. He'd approved only three of them.

As the sole Wizard Lord, Harry would have to ratify the entirety of the new House of Wizard Commons. He'd have to approve every new judge. He'd have to sign off on every new law. But he wasn't feeling charitable. The purebloods wouldn't be able to bribe their way into favoritism. No one would get special treatment under the law.

The Wizarding World was going to be a very different place in a short amount of time.

Very different. For Harry knew it would be probably ten years before the next round of Wizard Lords were approved, time enough for open minded youngsters to get their feet wet in the world. Time enough so that the ancient dinosaurs of the Wizarding World could get themselves convicted of rules people would have been terrified to enforce against them in the past.

Harry Potter, Wizarding Barrister, had just completed his greatest work. He unsealed the doors, restored the magic of the room, and handed the proclamations to a shocked Rufus Scrimgeour. Rufus would be holding office, as temporary Minister, until the new plans could be put in place.

Lord Potter and Baron Black walked out the courtroom and didn't turn around. He'd never set foot inside this room again. It was a place of injustice and stupidity. And since he was forced to help start a new world, he'd really force a new world into being.